

Darien Beautification Commission Meeting

Monday Sept. 12th, 2011

Attendance: Suzanne Schutte, Bob Baker, Phyllis Hawkins, Marcia Meinerth, Sandy Filmer, John Schlach, Sabina Harris.

Open meeting: welcome to David May, observing our meeting today.

Financials: Marcia M. stated we ended our Fiscal year 2010 -2011 with a balanced budget as of July 1, 2011.

Going forward budget is very tight.

Large expenditures have been the care of Flower Baskets by Susan Haines.

Susan H. is currently on hourly billing. Changed from last year, she was on a set contract. July bills submitted for watering and care of baskets and islands is but August bill has not been submitted. Predicting the cost will increase because of additional time incurred due to hurricane Irene. (taking down and rehangng baskets)

Marcia's other budget concerns the Special acct. Which is not enough for the care of the islands for the rest of the season. We will have to care/weed some areas ourselves. .

Next year need to look at better combination of flowers for the baskets and plants needing less watering. Also current Baskets to come down early Oct. Half not doing well after the storm. Contract with Susan Haines is from May to end of Sept. Everyone agreed. Sandy D is working on other combinations for next year's baskets. Will present options at future meeting.

Also suggested - concentrate Baskets to the Main Downtown area. Further discussion.

AAG (adopt a garden) update: Heather and Cindy working on a list of all Gardens and also new areas to be adopted. We need to develop a plan so areas/islands have continuity.

Landscaper Richard Jones interested in an AAG.

Open Discussion: would/could Whole Foods adopt Ext 11? Change pricing on the bigger AAG? (ie Ext 11 &13)

Cemetery Update: John S. after storm lots of limbs down, working on getting est. on various clean up sites. (mainly, Weed Cemetery – Christine Calvey caring for the area reported lots of limbs down).

Confirmed - the Town took trees down at the cemetery on Stamford border. (a neighbor called to say the trees were dying)

Marcia added she could move some \$ over to help with that expense.

Also the Town does have a \$10,000 budget for tree replacement on Public land.

Tree Conservancy update: having a Redbud Tree Sale fundraiser.

The group is planning to put in about 20 trees around town. Will work with us to plant at the Berm and Ext 11 and 13.

Berm – Open discussion: Need a general design, past plan not feasible. Grasses suggested something to maintain soil from eroding. Watering big concern.

David May and Suzanne will collaborate. Visit various country clubs (Weeburn and CCD) to ask grounds keepers their suggestions.

Volunteer Projects: High school students will fund raise for bulb planting for Berm.

Daisy Troop at Ox Ridge looking for an activity.

Mark Stop & Shop manager was suppose to donate some Spring Bulbs.

Whole Foods: Phyllis investigated the 10 cent bag refund donation program fund raiser. Might be idea for flower basket funds.

Signage: Bob reported some better compliancy with Realtor signs. Still problem with Commercial sign size and placement. Looking into enforcing a fine to get better compliance not much response. Problem with Police stapling No Parking signs to trees. Bad example and bad for the trees! Use the utility poles instead or reusable signs.

Other:

Special meeting in Oct. TBA

Audubon presentation 9/20 DCA